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REMARKS

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Claims 1-18 are pending in the application and are unamended.

For at least the reasons set forth below, withdrawal of all outstanding rejections is respectfully requested.

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Request for Interview Prior to Formal Action on Response

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Applicant requests an interview prior to formal action on this response. An "Applicant Initiated Interview Request Form" accompanies this response. Please contact Applicant's undersigned representative to schedule the interview.

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Specification

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In the outstanding Office Action, the Examiner alleges that there is no antecedent basis in the specification for the claimed "computer-readable medium." Applicant respectfully traverses this objection. Page 17, lines 26-30 of the present specification reads as follows (underlining added for emphasis):

> The present invention can be included in an article of manufacture (e.g., one or more computer program products) having, for instance, <u>computer useable media. The media has embodied therein, for instance, computer readable program code means for providing and facilitating the mechanisms of the present invention</u>. The article of manufacture can be included as part of a computer system or sold separately.

This text portion clearly describes a "computer-readable medium." Accordingly, withdrawal of this objection is respectfully requested.

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Claim Rejections under 35 U.S.C. §101

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Claims 7-12 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 101 because the claimed invention is alleged to be directed to non-statutory subject matter for lacking the necessary physical articles

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or objects to constitute a machine or a manufacture. Applicant respectfully traverses this rejection.

Claims 7-12 are written in "means plus function" format which is statutorily permitted under 35 U.S.C. § 112, sixth paragraph[1]. Furthermore, page 17, lines 22-25 of the present specification, which reads as follows (underlining added for emphasis), explicitly discloses how an apparatus expressed in this format is to be implemented:

> The present invention may be implemented with any combination of hardware and software and may be also implemented as a service. If implemented as a computer-implemented apparatus, the present invention is implemented using means for performing all of the steps and functions described above.

An apparatus expressed in "means plus function" format falls clearly within the scope of at least a "machine" of 35 U.S.C. § 101. In view of this fact, in combination with 35 U.S.C. § 112, sixth paragraph, which explicitly permits such a claim format, withdrawal of this rejection is respectfully requested.

Prior Art Rejections

Claims 1-18 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as being anticipated by U.S. Patent Application Publication No. 2001/0018671 A1 (Ogasawara). Applicant respectfully traverses this rejection.

1. Patentability of independent claims 1, 7 and 13 over Ogasawara

Claim 1 reads, in part, as follows (underlining for emphasis only):

> (c) connecting the tuples to represent sequential events of the one or more processes

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[1] An element in a claim for a combination may be expressed as a means or step for performing a specified function without the recital of structure, material, or acts in support thereof, and such claim shall be construed to cover the corresponding structure, material, or acts described in the specification and equivalents thereof.

Claim 7, reads, in part, as follows (underlining for emphasis only):

> (c) means for <u>connecting the tuples to represent sequential events of the one or more processes</u>

Claim 13, reads, in part, as follows (underlining for emphasis only):

> (c) <u>connecting the tuples to represent sequential events of the one or more processes</u>

One preferred embodiment of the present invention is depicted in Figure 5, and is described in part on page 7, lines 4-19 of the present application which reads as follows (underlining added for emphasis):

> According to the invention, a process is defined by indicating one or more of the semantic terms in order to represent a goal of the process. The goal is achieved by generating chains of the event which terminate at the tuples corresponding to each semantic term. All of the chains of events must terminate in order to achieve the goal. <u>The chain of events is generated by connecting the tuples with keys in order to represent the sequential events enabled by the cooperating entities (Figure 5).</u> Each event is enabled by implementing one or more processes with the goal of producing one or more objects, each associated with the tuple matching the template representing the condition present at the time of the event. The process used to produce the objects is called "ground". Each ground implements one or more chains of events starting with the input tuple corresponding to the present condition and ending with one or more output tuples each representing the object produced under that condition. (Figure 5). The events enabled by the ground according to the invention can nest chains of events enabled by their respective grounds. Such nesting of grounds can continue for as long as necessary to reach a process implemented by a single entity independently (without cooperation), which is called an "atomic process."

That is, Figure 5 shows a plurality of tuples connected to represent <u>sequential events</u> of a process. One example of this tuple connecting process is illustrated in Figures 13-15 of the

present specification, which is described, in part, on page 15, line 10 through page 16, line 6 of

the present application, and more particularly on page 16, lines 4-6 of the present application,

which reads as follows (underlining added for emphasis):

> The target tuple was generated by finding <u>connected tuples to represent</u>
> <u>sequential events</u> in the chain terminating at the tuple corresponding to
> the semantic term "PATIENT" (shown on the right of Figure 15).

Nothing in Ogasawara's workplace shopping ordering process has anything to do with

connecting tuples to represent sequential events of a process.

In the outstanding Office Action, the Examiner equates the disclosure in paragraph

[0072], lines 1-4 of Ogasawara with exemplary step (a) of claim 1, and equates the disclosure in

paragraph [0076] of Ogasawara with exemplary steps (b) and (c) of claim 1. Paragraphs [0071]

and [0076] of Ogasawara read as follows (underlining added for emphasis):

> [0071] FIG. 6 shows a flowchart of the <u>workplace shopping order process</u>,
> in other words, the detailed processes in steps S1 to S3 of FIG. 5. When a
> process starts in the drawing, an employee, in other words, a client first
> inputs his or her name and password to the personal computer in step S1.
> The process of the login to the workplace shopping system is carried out.
> The web server 12 that receives the client's name and password via the
> Internet or an intranet in step S12, retrieves the client's name and
> password from a client management database of the client management
> system 17, for example. In the case that the input name and password are
> correct, the login of the client is approved.
>
> [0072] <u>Then in step S13, the web server 12 retrieves the name of the</u>
> <u>merchandise, price, unit, discount information from the price database,</u>
> <u>and for example, the database in the shop system 18, creates a</u>
> <u>merchandise order menu, and displays the menu on a screen of the</u>
> <u>personal computer 11 provided on the side of a client.</u> The price of each
> piece of merchandise on the day is displayed in the merchandise order
> menu. The price may generally change every day.
>
> [0073] There are two kinds of discount information. One is the discount
> information provided at a shop level that is uniformly applied to all
> purchasers. The other is the discount information provided at a private
> level that is applied for particular purchasers. As for the latter information,

purchasers are specified by the identifier of a user at the time of login. The discount information to the special purchaser is obtained from the database of the client management system 17 on the basis of a one-to-one marketing technique to be displayed in the merchandise order menu.

[0074] As a menu of merchandise, characters are fundamentally used in consideration of the response of a client. The image information and explanation of the merchandise are displayed by clicking the image display button on a menu panel. This function is convenient in the case that the name of merchandise is not clearly remembered, or in the case that the differences between merchandise are not grasped. Therefore, this system is configured so as to be linked with a multimedia database that does not show drawings. For example, when "image display" is designated with the menu of an apple, the images of apples of a plurality of types and the explanation are displayed. When "image display" is designated with menu of fish, the images of fish of a plurality of types, the respective characteristics, and the explanation about the cooking are displayed.

[0075] In addition to the menu of general merchandise, the set menu or the recipe of cooking is displayed as a menu. For example, a set menu of Chinese style dinner for four persons, the merchandise menu of the ingredients to be purchased for sukiyaki, the cooking method, or the like are displayed. A client picks only a necessary piece of merchandise from the merchandise menu, and clicks "put into basket".

[0076] The client of the workplace 10 designates the merchandise to be purchased and the number of pieces of the merchandise from the merchandise order menu, using a personal computer 11, and creates the shopping list in step S14. A plurality of shopping lists can be created. Further, a new shopping list can be created by making additions or corrections to the shopping list that was created previously.

It is assumed that the Examiner is equating the merchandise items stored in Ogasawara's database with the claimed tuples, wherein each merchandise item has a list of properties and a set of attributes. However, even under this assumption, nothing in paragraph [0076] of Ogasawara has anything to do with connecting tuples to represent sequential events of a process. More specifically, the designation of merchandise and the number of pieces of merchandise referred to by the Examiner in paragraph [0076] of Ogasawara does not involve connecting tuples to represent sequential events of a process. At best, this process describes activity that occurs with

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respect to <u>individual</u> tuples (i.e., individual merchandise items and their respective list of properties and set of attributes, such as the number of pieces).

Accordingly, Applicant respectfully requests that the Examiner reconsider and withdraw the §102(b) rejection of claims 1, 7 and 13.

2. Patentability of the dependent claims over the cited references

The dependent claims 2-6, 8-12 and 14-18 are believed to be patentable over the cited references for at least the reason that they depend from patentable base claims and recite additional patentable elements. Therefore, Applicant respectfully requests that the Examiner reconsider and withdraw the §102(b) rejections of claims 2-6, 8-12 and 14-18.

Conclusion

Insofar as the Examiner's rejections were fully addressed, the instant application including all pending claims is in condition for allowance. A Notice of Allowability of all pending claims is therefore earnestly solicited.

Respectfully submitted,

LEONID YABLOKO

Sept. 21, 2007   By: *Clark Jablon*
_____(Date)_____   CLARK A. JABLON
                             Registration No. 35,039
                             AKIN GUMP STRAUSS HAUER & FELD LLP
                             One Commerce Square
                             2005 Market Street - Suite 2200
                             Philadelphia, PA 19103
                             Direct Dial: (215) 965-1293
                             Facsimile: (215) 965-1210
                             Email: cjablon@akingump.com

CAJ/MJ